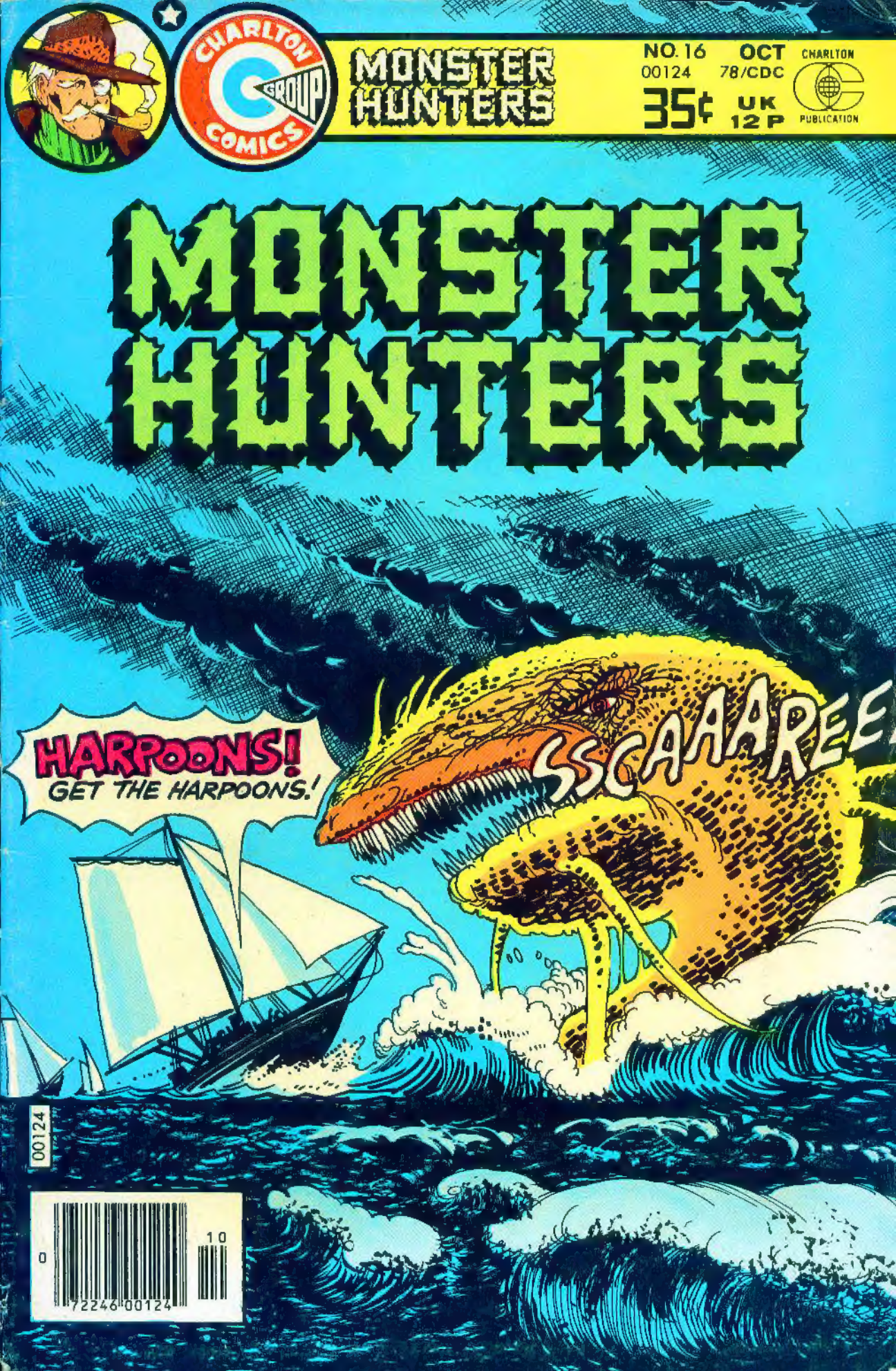
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CHARLTON PUBLICATION
MONSTER HUNTERS
HARPOONS! GET THE HARPOONS!
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THERE ARE NORMAL PEOPLE LIVING IN GREENWICH VILLAGE... PROSPEROUS, SUCCESSFUL RESIDENTS WHO RESENT THE BEARDED, WEIRD HIPPIES WHO CONGREGATE IN CRASH PADS IN DINGY OLD TENEMENTS. THEN, THERE ARE THE REALLY WEIRD ONES... PEOPLE WHO HAVE STRANGE BELIEFS AND PRACTICE STRANGE RITES IN GARISHLY DECORATED APARTMENTS, WORSHIPPING STRANGE GODS.
GIRLS LIKE REGINA SIMMS AND HER FOLLOWERS... WHO SWORE ALLEGIANCE TO THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS... SATAN!
The CONVERT
PRINCE OF DARKNESS, SHAITAN, DISPENSER OF EVIL, REVEAL YOURSELF TO WE WHO WORSHIP YOU!
HE HAS SPOKEN. THERE IS AN UNBELIEVER IN OUR MIDST. HE MUST BE PUNISHED!
SHE DOESN'T SEEM LIKE THE SAME GIRL WHO PROMISED TO MARRY ME!
D-BOII
MONSTER HUNTERS

MONSTER HUNTERS Vol. 4, No. 16, October, 1978,
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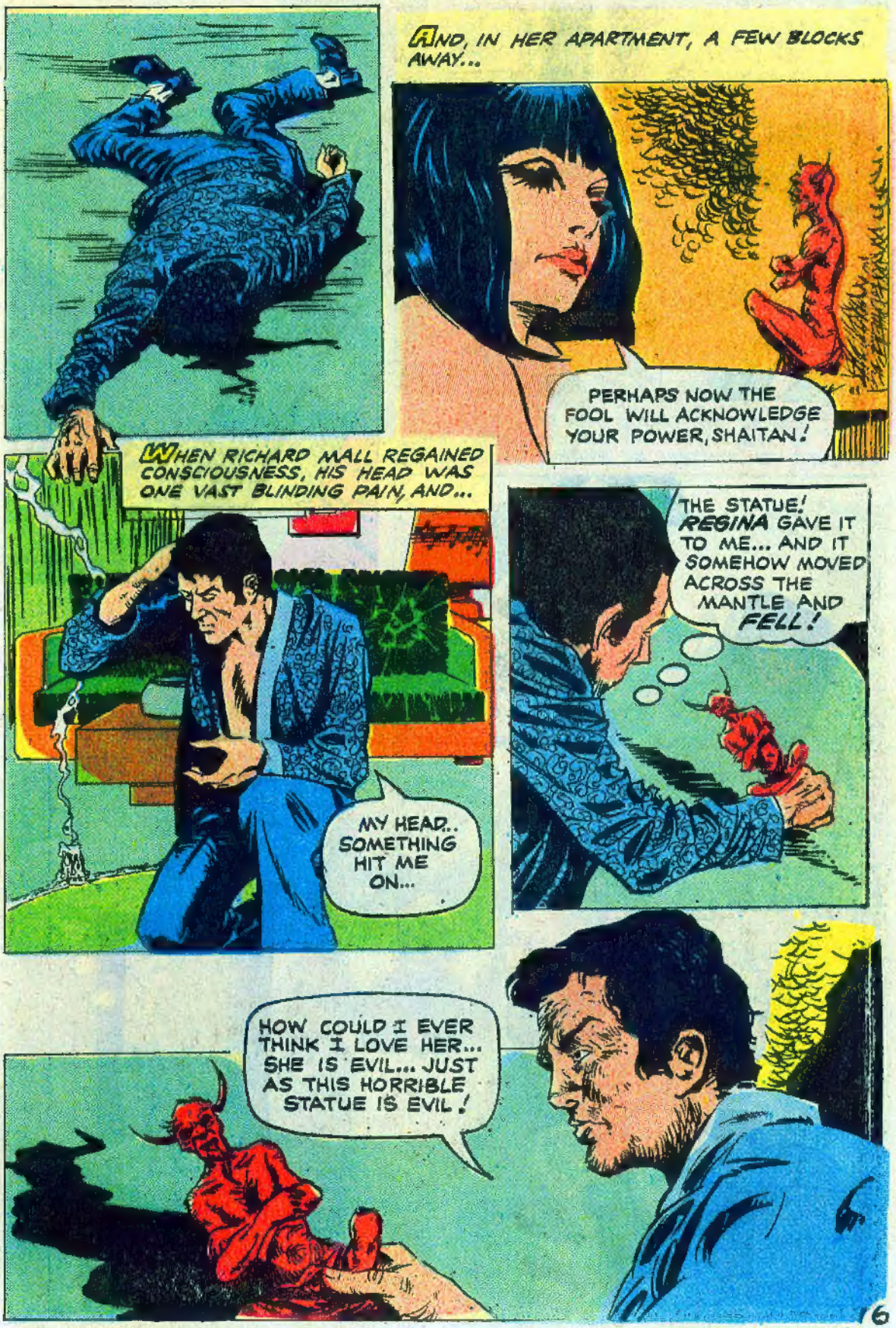
REVEAL YOURSELF, TRESPASSER, IN THIS FORBIDDEN ROOM.
COME ON, REGINA... YOU'VE HAD YOUR FUN... LET'S HAVE OUR LAUGHS AND THEN BLOW OUT THE CANDLES!
YOU ERRED, RICHARD MALL. THIS IS NOT A CHILDISH GAME WE PLAY, AND SHAITAN, PRINCE OF EVIL, DOES NOT FORGIVE!
YOU TREAT OUR DEEP BELIEFS AS A JOKE! I TRIED TO PERSUADE YOU THAT SHAITAN IS THE TRUE MASTER OF HUMANITY. NOW, I REALIZE YOU NEVER WILL BELIEVE.
YOU'RE ALL INSANE AND YOU'RE THE CRAZIEST OF THEM ALL, REGINA.
YOU WILL BELIEVE, FOOL! SHAITAN, HIMSELF, WILL MAKE KNOWN THE TRUTH.
WHEN I MET REGINA, I WAS CRAZY ABOUT HER... UNTIL I FOUND OUT HOW SPACED OUT SHE IS OVER THIS SATAN WORSHIP GARBAGE!

THAT'S ODD... I NEVER NOTICED THAT BOOK-SHOP DOWN THERE!
I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING ELSE TO DO...
I'LL BROWSE AROUND AWHILE.
COME IN, SIR. WE HAVE MANY INTERESTING BOOKS HERE. LOOK AROUND AS MUCH AS YOU LIKE.
IT'S A WEIRD TITLE... 'PRINCE OF DARKNESS' ... IT WOULD BE A GREAT GIFT FOR REGINA.
THAT IS JUST FIFTY CENTS, SIR. IT IS A VERY OLD BOOK.
IT LOOKS IT, MISTER!
WHAT A NICE OLD GUY!
3

HOME TO HIS OWN LITTLE APARTMENT. COMFORTABLY FURNISHED, A TYPICAL BACHELOR'S PAD EXCEPT FOR ONE ITEM...
MAYBE THIS WILL HELP ME UNDERSTAND WHAT'S WRONG WITH REGINA'S SKULL.
I SAW YOUR TWIN BROTHER AT HER HOUSE TONIGHT, YOU DEVIL! YOU'RE NOTHING BUT AN UGLY, LIFELESS HUNK OF ROCK.
WHAT NONSENSE! IT SAYS HERE TO SPRINKLE SALT IN A CIRCLE, LIGHT CANDLES, AND READ THIS GIBBERISH!
RICHARD MALL WENT TO THE KITCHEN AND GOT A BOX OF SALT AND SOME CANDLES.
I'LL HOLD A LITTLE DEVIL WORSHIP OF MY OWN!
SHAITAN, MIGHTY PRINCE OF DARKNESS, I HEREBY SWEAR LOYALTY TO YOUR EVIL MAJESTY!
4

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

IBN SHALAL MORKI, SHAITAN! KURAZA KURAZA KURAZA!
INFANTILE NONSENSE!
NOW, IT SAYS TO PROSTRATE MYSELF BEFORE THE ALTAR...
STUPID!
AS HE LAY THERE, RICHARD MALL FELT A SUDDEN DANK CHILL, AND A HIDEOUS SMELL PERMEATED THE ROOM! HE STARTED TO STRAIGHTEN UP BUT...
POW!
5


AND, IN HER APARTMENT, A FEW BLOCKS AWAY...
PERHAPS NOW THE FOOL WILL ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR POWER, SHAITAN!
WHEN RICHARD MALL REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS, HIS HEAD WAS ONE VAST BLINDING PAIN, AND...
MY HEAD.. SOMETHING HIT ME ON...
THE STATUE! REGINA GAVE IT TO ME... AND IT SOMEHOW MOVED ACROSS THE MANTLE AND FELL!
HOW COULD I EVER THINK I LOVE HER... SHE IS EVIL... JUST AS THIS HORRIBLE STATUE IS EVIL!

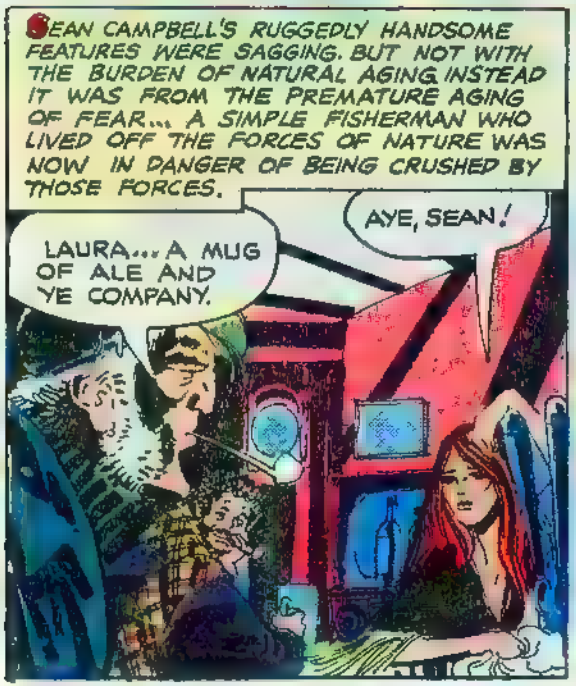
THIS HIDEOUSLY SCULPTED ATROCITY MAY HAVE SOME POWER, SINCE THAT WITCH GAVE IT TO ME!
THAT BOOK I BOUGHT... I THINK REGINA SOMEHOW MADE ME GO INTO THAT BOOKSTORE AND BUY IT!
ALL SHOVED THE STATUE IN A DRAWER AND WENT TO BED WITH THE CURIOUS BOOK THAT SEEMED TO CONTAIN SO MUCH EVIL...
HMMMM...I WONDER IF REGINA KNEW THIS WAS IN THE BOOK!
THEN, HE SLEPT...DREAMING OF THE GIRL HE ONCE HAD LOVED AND NOW FEARED WITH A DEEP AND NAMELESS DREAD.
YOU WILL RETURN TO ME, RICHARD. TOMORROW, YOU WILL COME BACK... AND I WILL BE WAITING.
THE NEXT DAY...
FIRST, I'VE GOT TO FIND THAT BOOKSHOP!

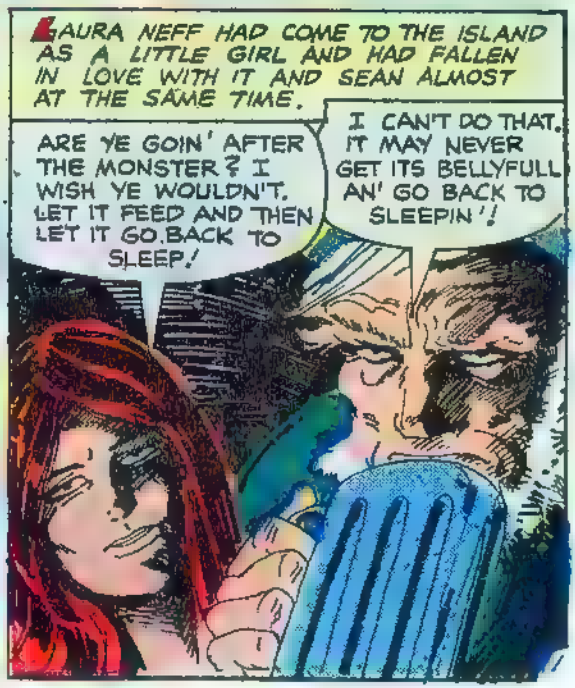
W 4TH ST.
THIS IS THE CORNER!
REGINA'S WITCHCRAFT ...THERE NEVER WAS A BOOKSHOP HERE!
I NEVER BELIEVED IN WITCHCRAFT... BUT REGINA SIMMS IS A WITCH...
BAM BAM
...AND IT'S TIME SOMEONE DID SOMETHING ABOUT IT!

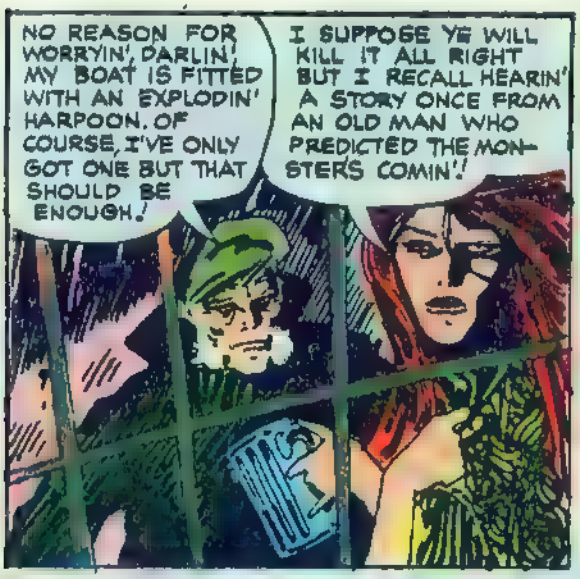
RICHARD, YOU LOOK GHASTLY! DIDN'T YOU SLEEP WELL? DID YOU HAVE HORRIBLE NIGHTMARES?
YOU KNOW I DID, REGINA.
YOU REALIZE I POSSESS GREAT POWERS? YOU KNOW THESE POWERS ARE GIVEN TO ME BY MY MASTER, SHAITAN?
I KNOW THAT, WITCH!
YOU GAVE ME THIS STATUE OF SHAITAN, REGINA. NOW, I'M RETURNING IT...
BUT NOT IN ONE PIECE!
YOU WOULDN'T DARE DESTROY THAT!
RICHARD... NO!
YOU FOOL... NOW, I MUST DESTROY YOU!
CRASH!!
9

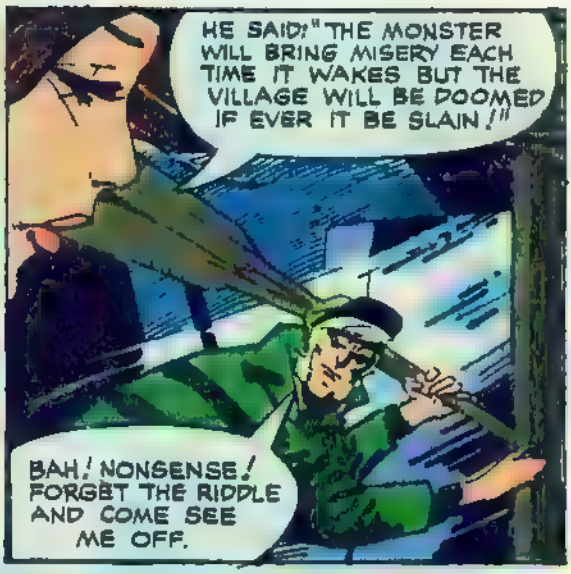
THE WITCH BEGAN TO MURMUR STRANGE WORDS, HER WEIRD EYES FIXED ON RICHARD MALL, HER VICTIM! BUT HE WAS NOT LIKE OTHER MEN...
SHAITAN, PRINCE OF DARKNESS, ARISE AND SMITE THY ENEMY!
IBN SHAL MORKI, SHAITAN! KURAZA KURAZA KURAZA!
RICHARD MALL KNEW GREAT FEAR... FOR HE SAW THE DEVIL HIMSELF MATERIALIZE IN THE ROOM...
SHAITAN, GUAZA! NIK IBN SHALAL! GUAZA, GUAZA GUAZA!
SUDDENLY, THERE WAS A HOWLING, SCREAMING ROAR AND THE DEVIL BEGAN TO VANISH IN A CLOUD OF SULFUROUS VAPOR!
Y-YOU MADE SHAITAN LEAVE! HOW?
THIS BOOK, REGINA! IT CONTAINS THE WORDS THAT SUMMONED YOUR MASTER... BUT A FEW PAGES FURTHER ON, IT TELLS HOW TO SEND HIM BACK TO HELL!
YOU HAVE DESTROYED US, YOU FOOL!
SOMEONE HAD TO, OLD WOMAN GOOD-BYE... YOUR EVIL POWER IS NO MORE.
End

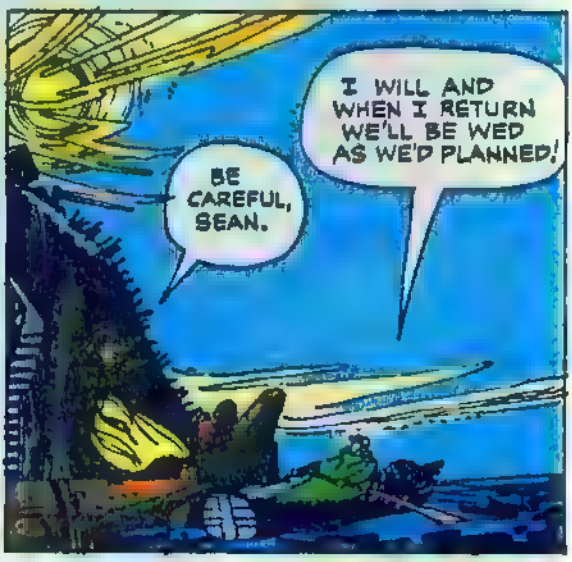
KILGORE WAS A TINY ISLAND LOCATED NOT FAR FROM THE SCOTTISH COASTLINE. THE MAJOR LIVELIHOOD OF ITS INHABITANTS WAS FISHING BUT DESPITE THE COMPETENCE OF ITS FISHERMEN THE CATCH WAS USUALLY POOR, BARELY KEEPING THE VILLAGE ALIVE. THEREFORE, WHEN A STREAM OF ICY WATER WOKE A HIBERNATING DEEP SEA DENIZEN THERE JUST WASN'T ENOUGH FISH TO FEED KILGORE AND...
MAC GREGOR'S TAVERN
THE KILGORE MONSTER
GEO. WILDMAN EDITOR
NICK CUTI WRITER
D5B42

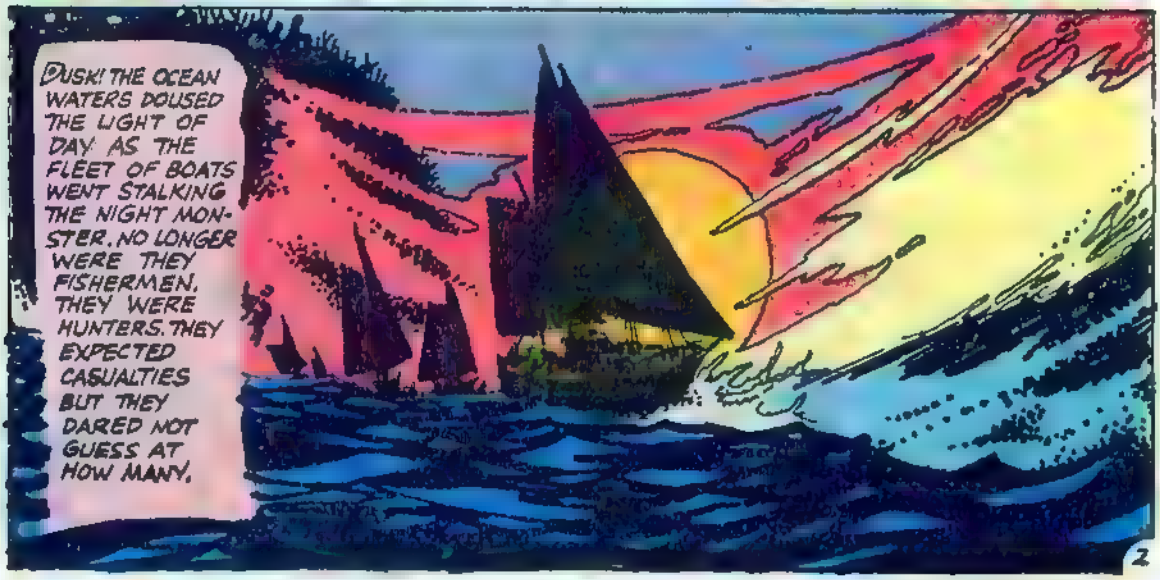

SEAN CAMPBELL'S RUGGEDLY HANDSOME FEATURES WERE SAGGING. BUT NOT WITH THE BURDEN OF NATURAL AGING. INSTEAD IT WAS FROM THE PREMATURE AGING OF FEAR... A SIMPLE FISHERMAN WHO LIVED OFF THE FORCES OF NATURE WAS NOW IN DANGER OF BEING CRUSHED BY THOSE FORCES.
LAURA... A MUG OF ALE AND YE COMPANY.
AYE, SEAN!


LAURA NEFF HAD COME TO THE ISLAND AS A LITTLE GIRL AND HAD FALLEN IN LOVE WITH IT AND SEAN ALMOST AT THE SAME TIME.
ARE YE GOIN' AFTER THE MONSTER? I WISH YE WOULDN'T. LET IT FEED AND THEN LET IT GO BACK TO SLEEP!
I CAN'T DO THAT. IT MAY NEVER GET ITS BELLYFULL AN' GO BACK TO SLEEPIN'!


NO REASON FOR WORRYIN', DARLIN'. MY BOAT IS FITTED WITH AN EXPLODIN' HARPOON. OF COURSE, I'VE ONLY GOT ONE BUT THAT SHOULD BE ENOUGH.
I SUPPOSE YE WILL KILL IT ALL RIGHT BUT I RECALL HEARIN' A STORY ONCE FROM AN OLD MAN WHO PREDICTED THE MONSTERS COMIN'!


HE SAID! "THE MONSTER WILL BRING MISERY EACH TIME IT WAKES BUT THE VILLAGE WILL BE DOOMED IF EVER IT BE SLAIN!"
BAH! NONSENSE! FORGET THE RIDDLE AND COME SEE ME OFF.




DUSK! THE OCEAN WATERS DOUSED THE LIGHT OF DAY AS THE FLEET OF BOATS WENT STALKING THE NIGHT MONSTER. NO LONGER WERE THEY FISHERMEN. THEY WERE HUNTERS. THEY EXPECTED CASUALTIES BUT THEY DARED NOT GUESS AT HOW MANY.
2

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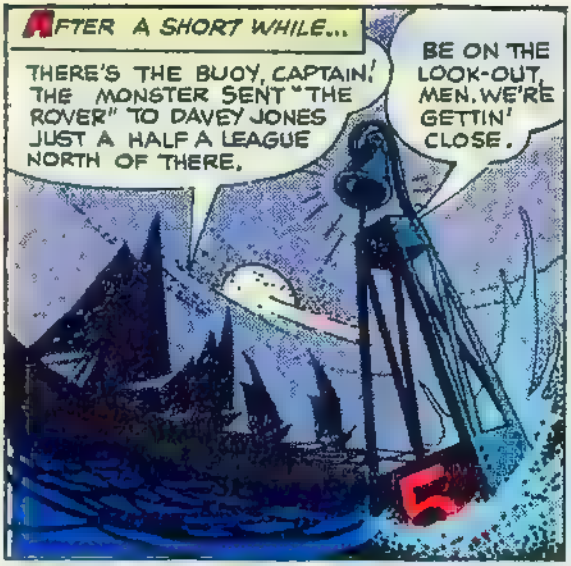
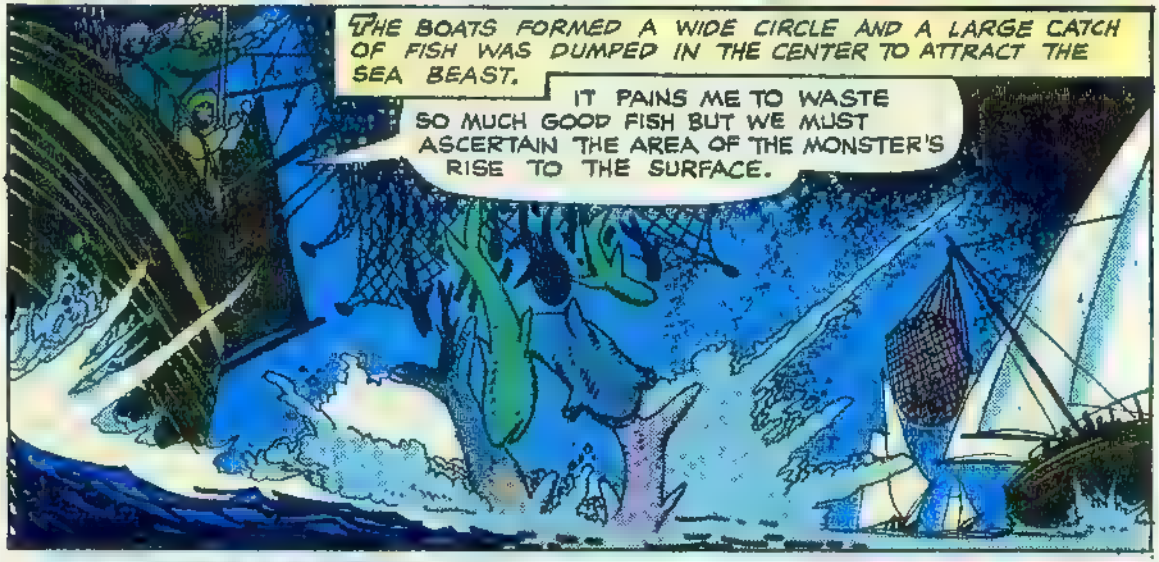
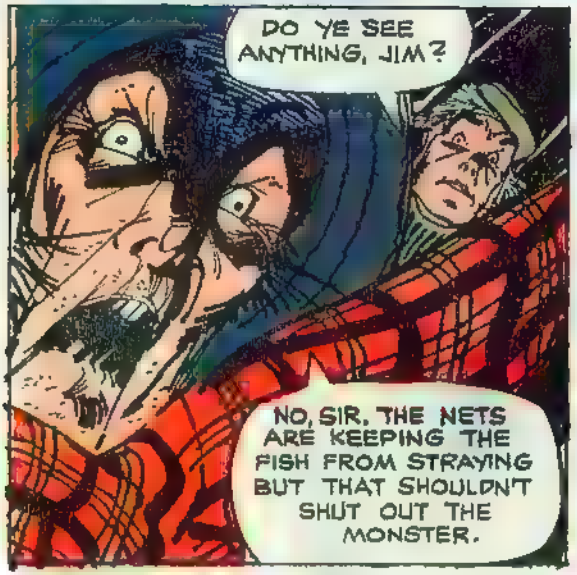
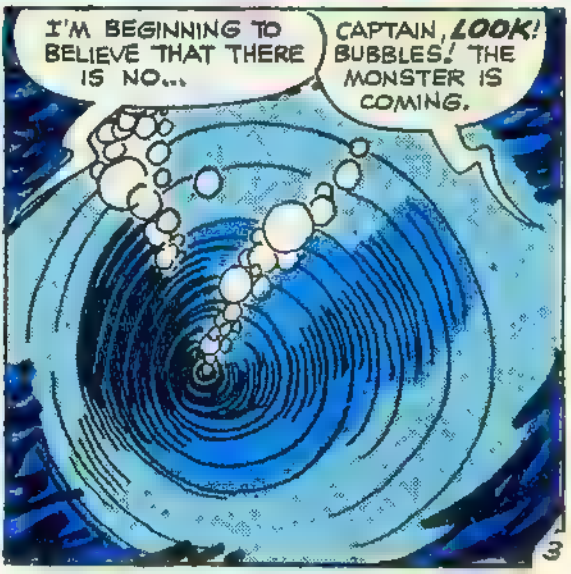
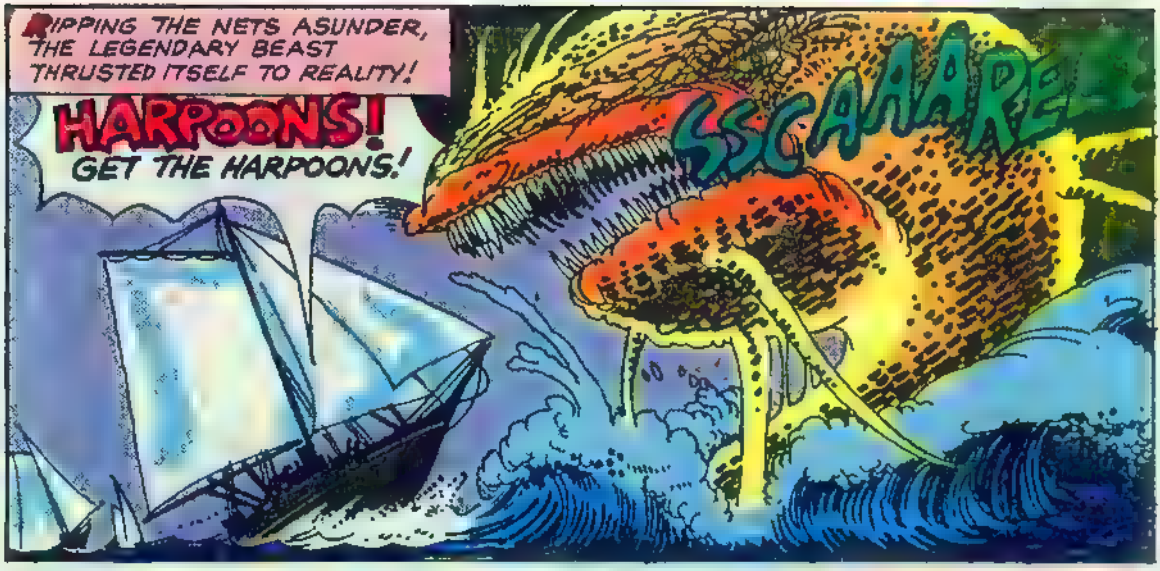

AFTER A SHORT WHILE...
THERE'S THE BUOY, CAPTAIN! THE MONSTER SENT "THE ROVER" TO DAVEY JONES JUST A HALF A LEAGUE NORTH OF THERE.
BE ON THE LOOK-OUT, MEN. WE'RE GETTIN' CLOSE.

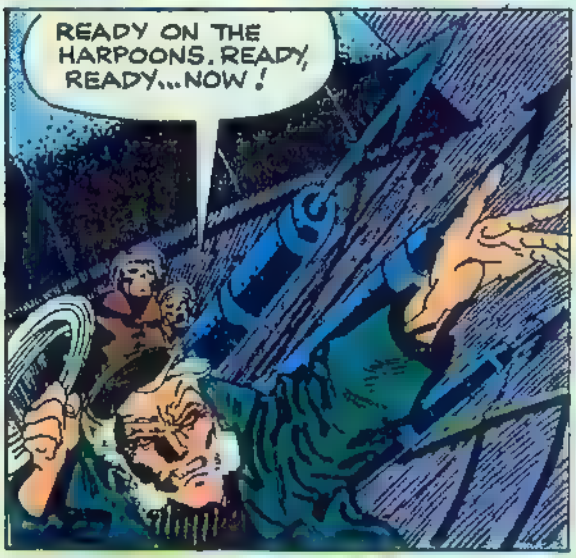
THIS IS THE SPOT, CAPTAIN.
ALL RIGHT, JIM, SIGNAL THE OTHER BOATS.


THE BOATS FORMED A WIDE CIRCLE AND A LARGE CATCH OF FISH WAS DUMPED IN THE CENTER TO ATTRACT THE SEA BEAST.
IT PAINS ME TO WASTE SO MUCH GOOD FISH BUT WE MUST ASCERTAIN THE AREA OF THE MONSTER'S RISE TO THE SURFACE.

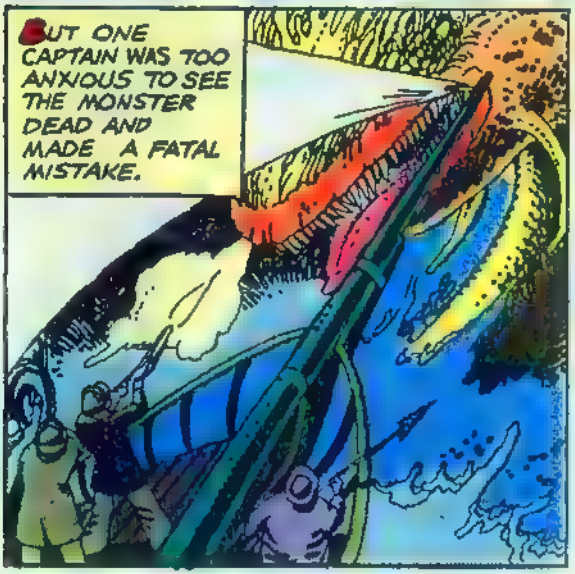

DO YE SEE ANYTHING, JIM?
NO, SIR. THE NETS ARE KEEPING THE FISH FROM STRAYING BUT THAT SHOULDN'T SHUT OUT THE MONSTER.

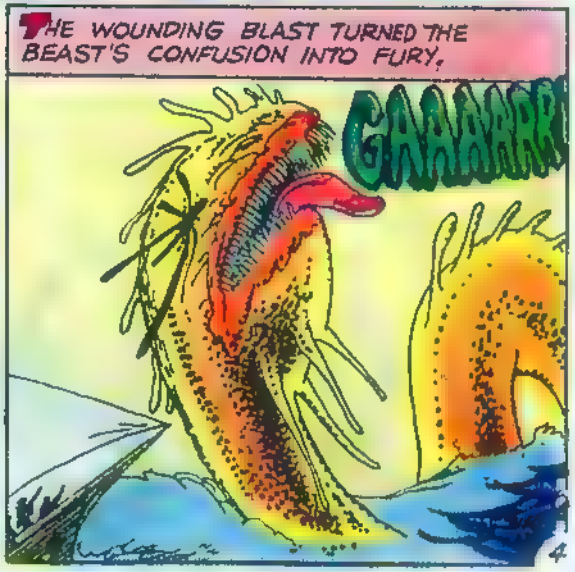

I'M BEGINNING TO BELIEVE THAT THERE IS NO...
CAPTAIN, LOOK! BUBBLES! THE MONSTER IS COMING.

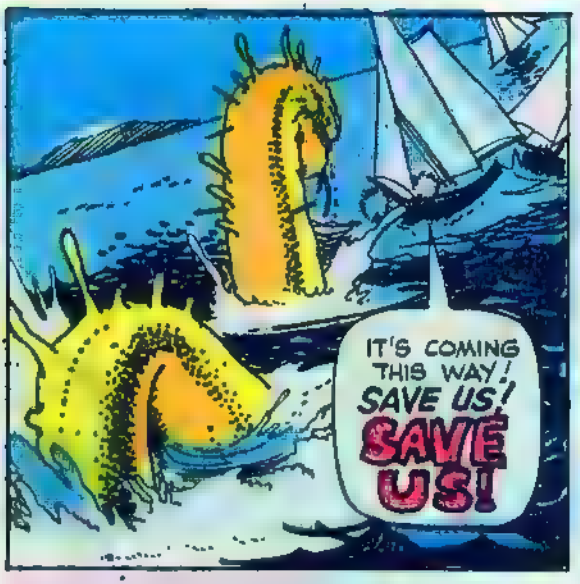

RIPPING THE NETS ASUNDER, THE LEGENDARY BEAST THRUSTED ITSELF TO REALITY!
HARPOONS! GET THE HARPOONS!
SSCAAARE

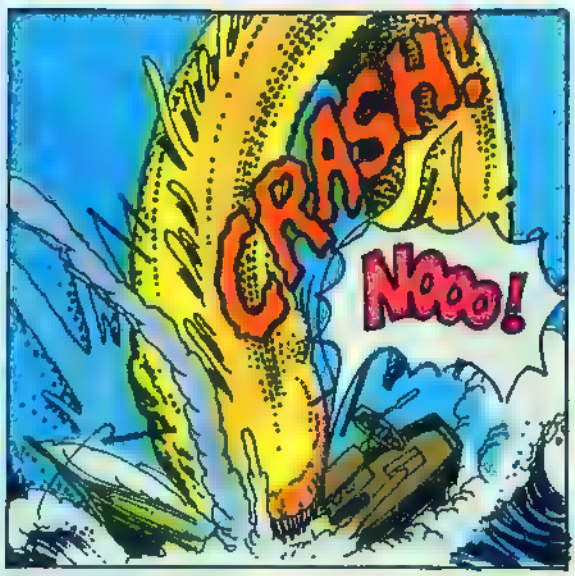

READY ON THE HARPOONS. READY, READY...NOW!

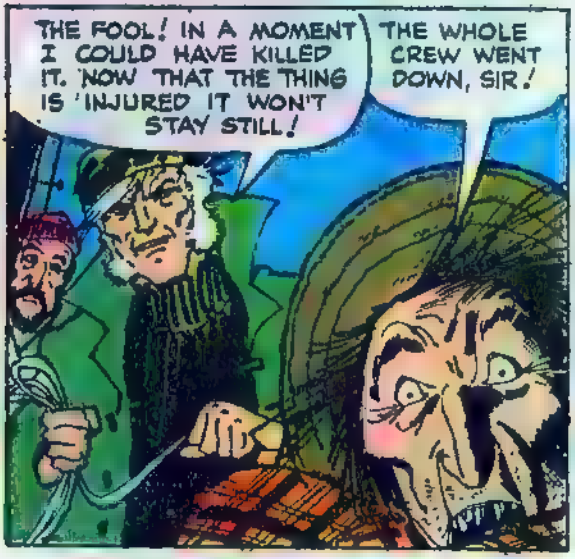
ALL HITS! HOLD ITS HEAD STEADY SO I CAN FIRE THE EXPLODIN' SPEAR AT IT!


BUT ONE CAPTAIN WAS TOO ANXIOUS TO SEE THE MONSTER DEAD AND MADE A FATAL MISTAKE.


THE WOUNDING BLAST TURNED THE BEAST'S CONFUSION INTO FURY.
GAAAARR

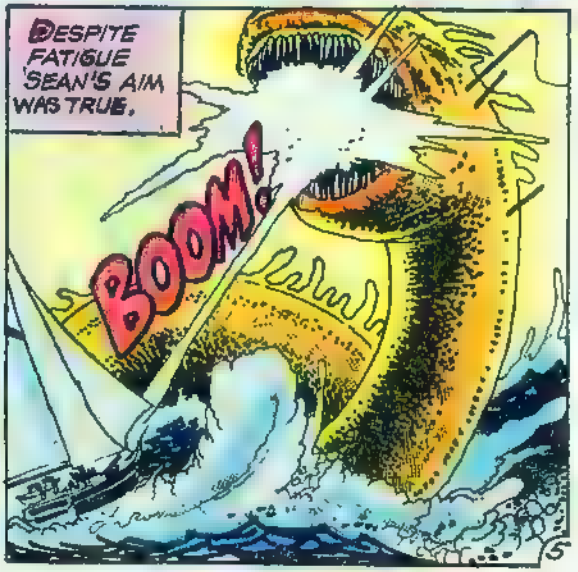

IT'S COMING THIS WAY! SAVE US! SAVE US!

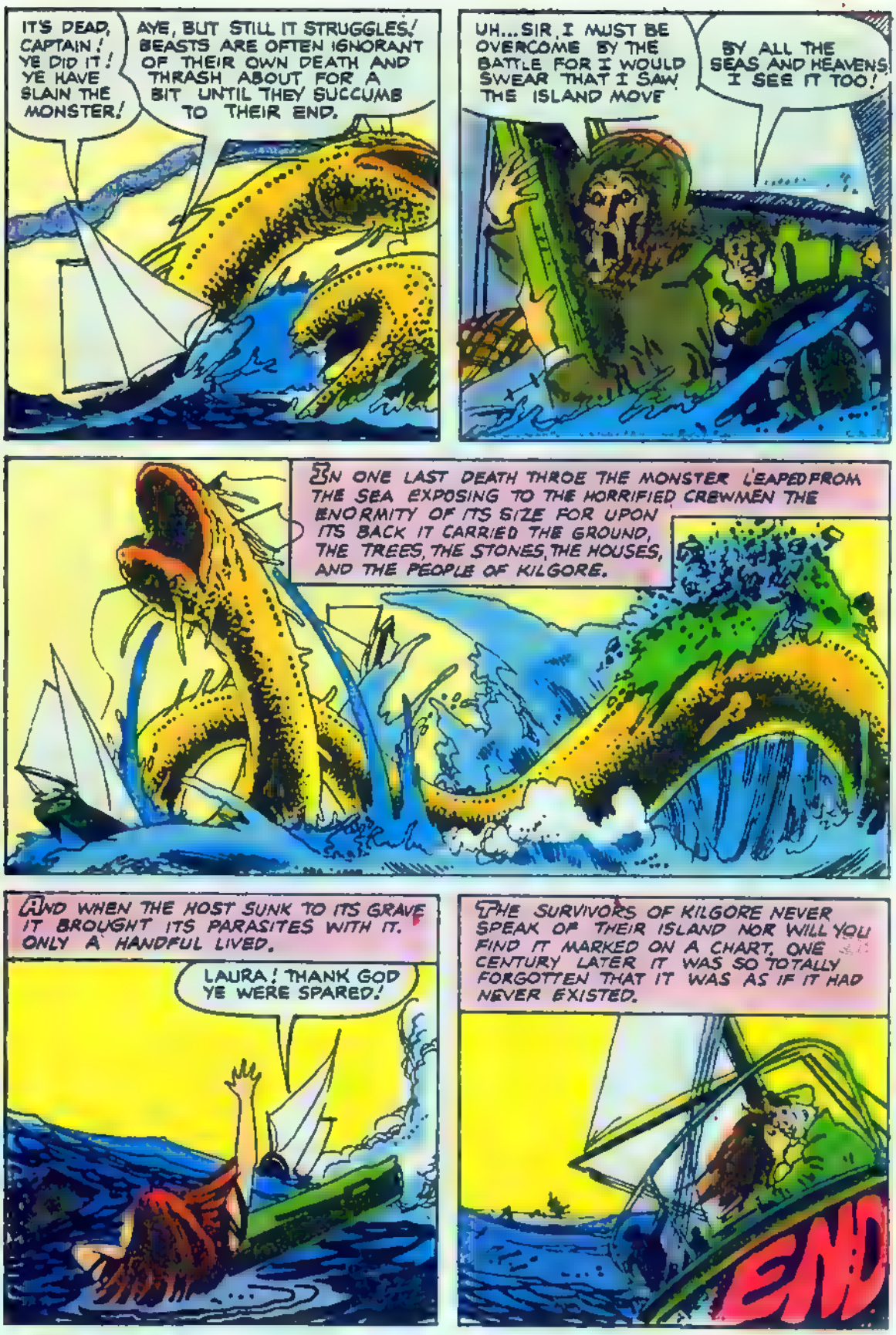

CRASH!
Nooo!


THE FOOL! IN A MOMENT I COULD HAVE KILLED IT. NOW THAT THE THING IS INJURED IT WON'T STAY STILL!
THE WHOLE CREW WENT DOWN, SIR!

ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT THEY HELD ON. SEVERAL TIMES THE DEEP SEA DENIZEN PLUNGED INTO THE WATER THREATENING TO TAKE THE BOATS WITH IT BUT IT ALWAYS RETURNED.
IT'S SURFACING AGAIN, SIR.
PREPARE THE HARPOON.

THE DAWN. WE WON'T NEED LIGHTS ANY MORE AND LOOK HOW CLOSE WE ARE TO KILGORE.
WE'RE TOO CLOSE. I'M GOING TO FIRE THE HARPOON NOW. IF I MISS WE'RE ALL DEAD.


DESPITE FATIGUE SEAN'S AIM WAS TRUE.
BOOM!


IT'S DEAD, CAPTAIN! YE DID IT! YE HAVE SLAIN THE MONSTER!
AYE, BUT STILL IT STRUGGLES! BEASTS ARE OFTEN IGNORANT OF THEIR OWN DEATH AND THRASH ABOUT FOR A BIT UNTIL THEY SUCCUMB TO THEIR END.
UH...SIR, I MUST BE OVERCOME BY THE BATTLE FOR I WOULD SWEAR THAT I SAW THE ISLAND MOVE
BY ALL THE SEAS AND HEAVENS, I SEE IT TOO!
IN ONE LAST DEATH THROE THE MONSTER LEAPED FROM THE SEA EXPOSING TO THE HORRIFIED CREWMEN THE ENORMITY OF ITS SIZE FOR UPON ITS BACK IT CARRIED THE GROUND, THE TREES, THE STONES, THE HOUSES, AND THE PEOPLE OF KILGORE.
AND WHEN THE HOST SUNK TO ITS GRAVE IT BROUGHT ITS PARASITES WITH IT. ONLY A HANDFUL LIVED.
LAURA! THANK GOD YE WERE SPARED!
THE SURVIVORS OF KILGORE NEVER SPEAK OF THEIR ISLAND NOR WILL YOU FIND IT MARKED ON A CHART. ONE CENTURY LATER IT WAS SO TOTALLY FORGOTTEN THAT IT WAS AS IF IT HAD NEVER EXISTED.
END

EVERYBODY PAYS!

THE STATUE OF THE EGYPTIAN GOD OF THE NETHER WORLD, THE LAND OF THE DEAD, WAS GIVEN TO JERROLD PAIGE BY ONE OF HIS MANY YOUNG LADY FRIENDS....A LADY FRIEND WHO HAD HOPED TO MARRY THE WEALTHY YOUNG RAKE BUT WHO WAS SENT AWAY IN TEARS JUST AS THE ONES BEFORE HER HAD BEEN...AND WHOSE SUCCESSORS WOULD BE TREATED EQUALLY CRUEL!
YOU ARE CRUEL, JERROLD... HOW CAN YOU CAST ME OUT AFTER ALL WE....
CEASE YOUR CATERWAULING, WENCH! GET OUT BEFORE I SUMMON THE CONSTABLES AND HAVE YOU GAOLED!
NICHOLAS AIASCA

YOU'RE EVIL, JERROLD... YOU'LL PAY FOR YOUR SINS!
BEGONE, WOMAN... I'M EXPECTING COMPANY IN A SHORT TIME!
YOU HEARD THE WENCH, OSIRIS! YOU ARE GOD OF THE WORLD OF THE DEAD...PERHAPS YOU WILL PUNISH ME FOR MY SINS!
JERROLD WENT ON HIS MERRY WAY...DRINKING, CAROUSING...DEFYING THE LAWS OF GOD AND MAN!
WAIT A MINUTE! POOR OLD OSIRIS MUST BE PRETTY DRY...HE HASN'T HAD A DRINK IN FIVE THOUSAND YEARS!
HAS EVERYONE GOT A DRINK?
HAVE A LITTLE WINE, OSIRIS! HA HA HA HA HA HA
OSIRIS.... EGYPTIAN GOD OF THE DEAD.. YOU'RE PRETTY SILLY LOOKING WITH ALL THAT WINE ON YOU, OSIRIS!
AT LAST, TOWARD DAWN, THE REVELERS DRIFTED AWAY...LEAVING JERROLD TO SLEEP WHERE HE HAD FALLEN...
NO...NO, DON'T TAKE ME, OSIRIS.... I DON'T WANT TO DIE!

YEEEAAAHH!
GOOD HEAVENS, PAIGE, WHAT HAPPENED?
N-NOTHING...I WAS DREAMING... A NIGHTMARE, YOU KNOW!
PAIGE, I'VE BEEN MEANING TO SPEAK TO YOU ABOUT THESE WILD DEBAUCHERIES! YOU...
OH, GET OUT, SMYTHE!
IT WAS YOU I HAD THE NIGHTMARE ABOUT...YOU WERE TAKING ME AWAY... YOU SAID I WAS DEAD!
STUPID STATUE... YOU'RE JUST A CHEAP HUNK OF METAL ..YOU HAVE NO POWER OF GOOD OR EVIL...
...I OUGHT TO SMASH YOU TO BITS!

BUT AS JERROLD PAIGE RAISED THE POKER TO DESTROY THE ANCIENT STATUE, SOMETHING STRANGE AND TERRIBLE HAPPENED...
AAAGGHH
I THOUGHT SO...THE BLIGHTER HAS PASSED OUT...I'LL SUMMON A PHYSICIAN!
WHEN JERROLD PAIGE RECOVERED CONSCIOUSNESS HE WAS IN HIS BED...
DON'T TRY TO TALK, MR. PAIGE, YOU'VE HAD A SLIGHT STROKE...YOU'LL RECOVER COMPLETELY IF YOU DO EXACTLY AS YOU'RE TOLD!
TAKE THE MEDICINE, MR. PAIGE. YOU'LL SLEEP...THAT'S WHAT YOU NEED MOST NOW!
NOW, MR. PAIGE ...STOP FIGHTING THE MEDICINE... LET YOURSELF SLEEP!
SHE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND ...IF I SLEEP I'LL DREAM...
OF OSIRIS!

HE DID DREAM...OF A STRANGE, DISTORTED WORLD...WHERE THE EGYPTIAN STATUE OF OSIRIS WAS ALIVE...ON HIS THRONE...SITTING IN JUDGEMENT!
NO! NO... YOU CAN'T....
MR. PAIGE...YOU MUST REST!
NO...NO, I CAN'T GO TO SLEEP....
IF I DO..,OSIRIS WILL GET ME!
REALLY, MR. PAIGE...YOU'RE MORE ILL THAN TH THE DOCTOR REALIZED!
THE DOCTOR CONFERRED WITH COLLEAGUES, ONE OF WHOM SPECIALIZED IN MENTAL ILLNESS.....
POOR CHAP.. HE'S DEFINITELY PARANOID!
DELUSIONS OF PERSECUTION!
EXTREME HYSTERIA! MUST BE SEDATED... PROTECTED AGAINST HIMSELF!

THEIR MEDICINE WAS STRONG.. TOO STRONG FOR JERROLD PAIGE TO RESIST...AND HE SLID OFF INTO AN UNEASY SLEEP!
YEEEEAAAGGH!!
WHERE AM I?

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

THIS IS A HOSPITAL, ISN'T IT? I DON'T WANT TO STAY HERE!
SSSSHH, MR. PAIGE ...YOU'VE BEEN DISTURBING THE OTHER PATIENTS!
N-NO...YOU CAN'T BE HERE! Y-YOU'RE NOT REAL!
TAKE YOUR MEDICINE, MR. PAIGE.
THIS IS A MENTAL HOSPITAL, MR. PAIGE. NOW, IF YOU COOPERATE WITH US, WE'LL GO A LOT EASIER WITH YOU! I AM DR. JONES.
YOU'RE LYING! YOU'RE OSIRIS!
EVERYONE MUST PAY, MR. PAIGE!
OF COURSE YOU'RE RIGHT, JERROLD PAIGE! THE GIRL WARNED YOU, REMEMBER? SHE SAID YOU WERE EVIL AND YOU'D HAVE TO PAY.... WELL, SHE WAS RIGHT!
YEEEEAAAGH!
END!

The INQUISITION

STORY BY FRANK PERGOLA

Night descended like an opaque mist upon the town while the fires slashed away at the dark, reluctantly giving way to the black. It was this blackness that bought a special sweetness to El Juez[1], one that he had not known in any of his former parishes. For him, the Spanish night held a serenity which he savored at the end of each day. The crystalline bursts of flame illuminated his face as he stood thoughtfully by the window, surveying the scene in front of him. He was finding it harder and harder to concentrate on sleep, for the stench of charred bodies always seemed to seep into his room, no matter how much he tried to keep the odor out. The death of these heretics of course was necessary, but their odor after death was more of a nuisance than were their sacrilegious ravings and rantings in life. El Juez's position as chief judge of the Inquisition in this district gave him final decisions over such matters of life and death.

But for El Juez, the stench of death itself could not ruin the brilliant beauty of a Spanish sunset. The fading sun was quilted against the night like burning ribbon of yellows and reds. The beauty of the sunset kept El Juez entranced as he drew his patio doors to a close.

As usual, he left a candle lit, trying to mask the scent of ashen decay outside in the courtyard. The trembling flame of candle competed with the flames which dutifully consumed the prisoners at the stakes in the courtyard. The light from both flames gave his face an eerie appearance, as his smooth face with its triangular features caught and reflected the light. His impassive expression showed the lack of compassion on his face. His life was a battle against these disciples of the devil, and they would destroy his religion with no second thought with their heresies. Yes, righteousness was in his hands, and death came quickly to those who challenged it.

Just as he was about to slip into sleep, the patio doors blew open in a loud bang. The wind fought with him for control of the doors. As he started to close them, he noticed one lone cloud in the otherwise clear night sky. It played innocent games of changing shapes and colors with him as if he were a child idly waiting for some entertainment. He found himself, just for a moment, trying to find a shape for this cloud. He decided it was most like a goat, with its fluffy, white hue and poorly defined horns.

He climbed back into his bed, making the heavy oaken posts shake only slightly. The wind had given his candle a new brilliance, and his room seemed to shake with the mad flickerings of the flame. As he fell to sleep, a strange dream seized control of that part of the mind which never sleeps. Faces, countless numbers of faces, seemed to be watching him. They showed no emotion, nor did they speak. They did not move toward him. They just watched him, with no emotion. In all the faces, there was one who showed a trace of emotion, and for a moment El Juez thought he was looking into a mirror. Yet, he could not be sure.

Stone cold. El Juez woke up stone cold, and in a sweat. As he did, the patio doors once more banged insistently against the walls. He sat frozen in his bed, afraid to approach them, as if those faces were outside his doors, waiting to gaze upon him. Eventually, he shakingly walked to the doors and closed them firmly, once more noticing the cloud, and also noted that it now had definitely moved closer to his quarters as well as had assumed the goat shape he had given it. The cloud seemed to be watching El Juez just as carefully as El Juez was watching it.

He once more returned to his bed. But as he was about to climb into it, the doors splintered at the sound of the wind rushing into his room with the screams of a thousand banshees. As the wind filled his room, his candle became a mad torch and had ignited his sheets and draperies. The cloud that had playfully floated outside was now in the room, slowly seeping in with patience and intentional slowness. The wind was throwing him around his quarters, so he grabbed one of the oaken posts on his bed in order to anchor himself against the tempest. As he did, the flames leaped at him from the candle that had consumed everything else in the room. Only El Juez was left. So he thought, until the sheer panic let go of him long enough for him to gaze through the flames and smoke to see one other figure in the room, and he recognized it immediately. It had been in his dream; the one face which, as it was doing right now, betrayed a hint of emotion. There stood the great winged figure, with a dreamy smile on his leathery face. As El Juez burned away into dust, the smile stayed on the visitor's face. Maybe Satan, the Prince of Darkness, liked those nice Spanish sunsets, too.

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[1]English translation: "El Juez", in this case, one of the highest in the Inquisition hierarchy.